

Summary of the Evaluation

I. Outline of the Project	
Country : Nepal	Project Title : Community-based Alternative Schooling Project
Issue / Sector : Basic Education	Cooperation scheme : Technical Cooperation Project (PROTECO)
Division in charge : JICA Nepal Office	Total cost: about 450 million yen
	Partner Country's Implementing Organization : Ministry of Education, Non formal Education Center
Period of Cooperation(R/D) : 2004.1.19-2009.10.18	Supporting Organization in Japan : None
<p>1. Background of the Project</p> <p>In Nepal, various projects have been launched to accelerate educational development. The government of Nepal has developed a National Action Plan aiming to meet a goal that all children have access to and complete Primary education by 2015. Although the government designed various programmes for out-of-school children, still many children remain with no access to education due to financial, physical, and social constraints. The Community-based Alternative Schooling Project (CASP), which was launched in 2004, is to assist improvement of the existing Alternative Schooling Programmes (ASPs) for out-of-school children and to promote alternative schooling through pilot activities with the technical assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Under the framework of Education For All (EFA), pilot activities are implemented by the Non-Formal Education Center (NFEC), Ministry of Education (MOE), and District Education Office (DEO) in coordination with local NGOs. Aiming at developing an operational model of ASP to enroll all children in schools, CASP conducted pilot activities in Dhading and Kathmandu (Siraha was also the pilot district at the beginning, but due to security situation, Siraha was replaced by Kathmandu).</p> <p>2. Project Overview</p> <p>(1) Overall Goal</p> <p>The model developed by the Project is adopted in other areas of Nepal</p> <p>(2) Project Purpose</p> <p>An operational model of the community-based alternative schooling programme is developed.</p> <p>(3) Output</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Institutions and organizations to operate ASP are strengthened through the Pilot Activities and Development of Dropout Program. 2) Children who participated in School Outreach Programme in the Pilot Activities have access to formal education and children who participated in Flexible Schooling Programme in the Pilot Activities complete primary school level education equivalent to formal education through community mobilization and support. 3) Network among stakeholders who are involved in NFE for children at the different levels is strengthened . 	

(4) Inputs (as of this final evaluation)		
Japanese side:		
No. of short term experts: 10 persons (188.3M/M)	Provision of equipment : vehicle, audio-visual equipment and so on (Approximately JPY 7 million)	
No. of trainees received in Japan: 13persons	Local Activity Cost: Approximately JPY 100 million	
Nepalese Side :		
Counterparts : 32 major counterparts in NFEC,6 in MoE, 6 in DoE, 20 in Dhading 25 in Kathmandu and 17 in Siraha district officers and JT/JTAs in five project districts		
Local cost : For the project office space and ordinary budget for operating ASP classes		
II. Evaluation Team		
Members of Evaluation Team	Leader	Tomoko Masuda
	Cooperation Planning 1	Yasuko Ono
	Cooperation Planning 2	Yo Shibagaki
	Evaluation Analysis	Etsuko Ikeda
Period of Evaluation	April 27, 2009~May 15, 2009	Type of Evaluation: Final Evaluation
III. Results of Evaluation		
1. Achievements		
(1) Project Purposes		
Project purpose is achievable if further measurement on policy recommendation is taken to extend CASP model, which was suggested in the mid-term evaluation.		
The ASP guideline is in the process of finalization. The Draft February 2009 version was disseminated among the C/Ps. It will be modified by integrating the lessons learnt from the pilot activities in Dhading and Kathmandu. The ASP Guideline was formulated by intensive discussion among C/Ps. The ideas and opinions of NFEC,DEO,SS, RP facilitator ,ASPM,CMC and ASP center had been reflected in the contents of the ASP Guideline. The workshop on policy recommendation from CASP experiences was held on February,2009 by inviting stakeholders from MOE,DOE,NFEC,DEO and donors. The key point of the ASP Guideline was presented in the workshop. By the end of the Project, the road map to extend CASP model to other area will be presented in the policy level.		
(2) Outputs		
Output 1 :		
The target seems to be achievable by the end of the Project, according to the indication for Institutional and Organizational Development set by the Project. The achievement rate is 88% by the checklist. The strengthened area is sharing of policy, regulation and program among NFEC,DEO,SS,RP,ASPM and facilitator, review and revision and development of PIM, mother school-based monitoring system application, collaboration with stakeholders to share CASP information, development of capacity of NFEC and DEO for CASP Project management. By the completion of the Project, collaboration among stakeholders, monitoring, data analysis will be further strengthened to achieve the target.		
Output 2:		
<SOP>		
According to ASP monitoring report from RPs, the average rate of transfer and attendance in Dhading and Siraha met the target. Regarding the average of transfer to formal schools, All of children who were enrolled		

at the 3rd year of SOP were able to transfer to formal school. However, 64% of them entered G4 while others entered G2 and G3.

< FSP >

According to ASP monitoring report from RPs, the average rate of completion did not meet the target because many students dropped out: 62% in Dhading and 51%:Siraha. The average attendance to FSP centers in Dhading and Siraha is high: 77% in Dhading and 86%:Siraha and 71% in Kathmandu.

Though target rate is achieved in average, it is observed that there are some centers that have lower rate, and the reason of the poor performance needs to be analyzed.

< Changes of Parents >

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice among parents have enhanced judging by selected indicators of the KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practice: KAP) Survey.

Output3 :

Although networking workshop and meeting have been sufficiently conducted in number, the continuous networking and follow-up of each workshop are needed for the model extension and policy recommendation.

2. Summary of Evaluation Results

Criteria	Evaluation Result
(1) Relevance <u>High</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving EFA Goal is addressed in policy documents of both Nepal government and Japanese government. The importance of ASP for EFA is clearly mentioned in SSR which is in the process of appraisal in this year in Nepal. • The needs of the target group were filled as the Project took need-based approach and strengthened community mobilization and participation. • ASP and promoted common understanding of the importance of ASP to achieve EFA in Nepal. • The target areas of the Project were appropriately selected considering security condition and social-cultural diversities.
Effectiveness <u>High</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ASP Guideline is going to be finalized and the road map for the policy recommendation for ASP and CASP model extension will be presented in the policy level by the end of project period.
Efficiency <u>Relatively Low</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency is rather low considering the size of Input and degree of achievement of Outputs. • The strategy of the model expansion has not sufficiently focused during the project implementation, because of the Project intensively supported the pilot area for the model formulation. • In terms of cost performance, assignment period and timing experts cost and relevance of C/P training are also questioned. Some of those are due to security reason. • The project shared experiences to develop CASP pilot activities and with collaborated to develop EMIS on for ASP with other donors .
Impact <u>Fair</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though ASP policy in SSR is clear, implementation process and modality is not yet developed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive impact is observed in the central level. Community mobilization and mother school-based monitoring of CASP model is included in the ASP policy. The CASP facilitator training manual was distributed in all 75 districts in 2007 and 2008. And CASP monitoring format was adopted in NFEC Monitoring Guideline. • UNESCO utilized the CASP model for their program design on ASP. • In the pilot areas ,positive impact such as community solidarity, formation of literacy classes for mothers, parents’ attitude change toward formal education ,CMC empowerment was observed.
Sustainability <u>Relatively Low</u>	<p>Policywise ,strategy to link ASP to the formal education is on discussion in DOE and NFEC. The future strategy for SOP and FSP planning process is still on the process of development. VDC’s involvement for formulation of VEP and community mobilization is not sufficient because of the absence of elected representatives,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially ,the budget allocation for non-formal education is scarce, which is about 1.6% of the education budget. • Technical capacity of C/Ps on planning, budgeting and monitoring has been developed. However capacity building of NFEC for model expansion has not been intended yet.

3. Factors that promoted realization of effects

Factors concerning the planning

The partner NGO understood the social economic condition of pilot areas and actively contributed to community mobilization and activation of ASP classes by closely working with ASP students, parents, teachers and head teachers .

Partner NGOs worked effectively in community-mobilization and activation of ASP classes by closely working with ASP students, parents, teachers and head teachers as they knew the local situation and difficulties.

During DMM held in the DEO, progress and problem of Project implementation were shared and discussed among SS, RP, Partner NGO, ASPM, and DEO. The communication among stakeholders in the district level was effective to improve pilot activities in target areas. The commitment and ownership of C/Ps at the district level was higher than central level because they recognized the positive influence of CASP pilot activities in their own districts. All and all, approach of capacity development is process oriented and C/P can develop capacity in all the cycle of Project management.

Factors concerning the implementation process

TTM members in NFEC at center level and DMM members in districts revel were appointed as the core management body of the project and progress and problem of project implementation were shared and discussed for making decision.

- At the district level, DEO provided facilitators’ additional salary, management cast for CMC, scholarship, uniforms, and stationeries for ASP students.

4. Factors that impeded realization of effects

Factors concerning the planning

The project purposes had been set as” Capacity building of model development “, and capacity building for model extension had not focused in the Project at beginning. the recommendation to add the policy recommendation for model expansion was suggested in the mid-term evaluation

Factors concerning the implementation process

The Literacy Campaign by GON (2008-2009) has influenced the Project activities to extend CASP model, because most officers at NFEC had to be involved in the big campaign for adult literacy. On the other hand, the NFEC officers learnt how to collaborate with local bodies through the campaign.

Frequent transfer of C/Ps has continuously occurred during the Project period. Director of NFEC and DEO changed several times. NFEC members also transferred frequently. Their understanding and involvement to CASP to achieve EFA differs and affected the process of CASP model development.

Due to the security condition, pilot activities in Siraha district had to be scaled down. Japanese experts and C/P's follow up in the district was not possible. Partner NGOs in 3 target districts also experienced the difficulties to work in the field because of insecurity and unpredictable situation.

5. Conclusion

The Project has achieved to develop community-based ASP model by conducting the intensive pilot activities in Siraha, Dhading and Kathmandu districts, formulating the ASP Guideline and strengthening networking among related agencies on ASP. 755 SOP students and 720 FSP students were benefited from the pilot activities in total. Among the developed CASP model, mother school-based monitoring, community mobilization, facilitator's additional trainings, assignment of EVs, formation of Child Club, and NGO partnership were identified as effective to encourage children to continue study. After three years, most SOP students entered in the formal schools and most FSP students completed class in the pilot centers. DEO, SS, RP and ASP's organizational and institutional capacity has been strengthened to manage ASP in the target districts.

The developed CASP model needs to be replicated in other areas of Nepal in order to strengthen existing ASP for achieving EFA. Though the ASP Guideline is useful for implementation at the field level, further policy recommendation and preparation of the road map for the CASP model extension is necessary to institutionalize the CASP model in MOE, DOE, NFEC and MOLD. To achieve the institutionalization, many challenges are seen in current Nepal. Even though the ASP policy is clearly mentioned in SSR, implementation and modality process is not yet developed. NFEC has an organizational weakness on policy recommendation, pilot development, research and dissemination. Common understanding of importance and needs of ASP among development partner is still lacking. In the district level, the system to integrate ASP into DEP planning process is on the process of development and the DEP and National education plan is not linked effectively. VDC's involvement for formulation of VEP and community mobilization is not taken because of the lack of elected representatives. Considering these factors, further steps for policy intervention need to be taken by the Project.

6. Lessons Learned

6-1 Lessons Learned

<Effectiveness of CASP Model>

(1) Linking ASP centers with regular schools is effective in ensuring quality of ASP centers

The Project has developed an effective mother school-based monitoring system. This ensures the basic quality of teaching-learning processes at ASP centres and strengthened relationship between ASP centres and regular schools. At the same time, this will contribute to make ASP institutionally sustainable. Follow-up by not only ASPM of regular schools but also SS and RP was also found effective for encouraging and technically assisting facilitators. FSP program requires examination items based on the condensed curriculum. In CASP, mother schools also helped FSP centres develop examination items as well. Such supports encourage facilitators despite of their low salary.

(2) Demand-side approach is needed for the disadvantaged group

Conventional ASP centres focus on supply-side interventions such as providing textbooks and appointing facilitators as regular schools do. CASP employed the demand-side approach to dig out the needs and raise awareness of the community at the same time and has shown that community mobilization is particularly essential in the remote and isolated communities.

(3) Intervention is needed for smooth bridging between ASP and regular schools

CASP considered special supports for ASP graduates was necessary to continue their education in regular schools. For example, RP negotiated with regular schools not to charge fees for ASP graduates. Promoting communication between ASP students and regular students during the Project has also contributed to diminishing fear and hesitation of ASP students for entering regular schools. CASP distributed school bags, uniforms, and stationary to those who progressed to regular schools. This was highly appreciated by the students, however, may be worth reconsidering from the viewpoint of financial sustainability.

(4) Assigning Educational Volunteers (EV) was effective to support facilitators

EVs were selected within the community to support facilitators. Even when facilitators are absent, ASP centers were kept open with the support of EVs. They also contributed to paying more attention to individual students by visiting students houses and meeting with their parents. Another positive aspect of EVs was that they are from the same community and the same ethnicity so that they can easily link students and facilitators, many of whom need to be invited from other communities.

(5) Additional Facilitators' training is necessary for quality ASP

Facilitators of ASP are required to have various skills. They have to teach all subjects in multi-grade and multi-age setting, and they have to be friendly and supportive to students who are at risk of dropping out of schools. The Project found that the current level of training is still too short to prepare them to respond to all these needs, and developed system of 15 days' needs based training since their backgrounds also vary. This requires some additional costs, however, the investment is minimum requirement for the quality point of view.

<Prospects for model extension>

(6) Utilization of VEP for ASP planning

The Project supported development of VEP in 4 VDCs and found that VEP is an important needs-based plan with the thorough survey and school mapping. Through the development process, the community raised awareness and developed clearer visions for education development in the community. However, the current difficulty is that VEP exists in only some 600 VDCs and that is why VEP cannot be integrated into DEP to get funding for ASP classes. It will be a long way to go before VEPs are really functioning.

(7) More capacity building for model extension was needed along with model development

For a model to be extended, the following three steps are required: 1) operational model is developed; 2) the model is institutionalized; and 3) stakeholders are equipped with technical capacity to implement the model or to provide technical support to implementers. The Project identified approaches and activities for more effective operation of ASP centers through intensive piloting in 9 centers of Dhading and 9 centers of Kathmandu (currently 8 centers). The Project also supported institutionalization of the model through policy recommendation workshop. Capacity building for model development was focused, however, capacity building for model extension was not intended in the Project. According to interviews with Japanese experts, NFEC's initiatives to CASP model extension to Sindhupalchok and Sarlahi districts were

not very successful. If so, there might have been much room for the Project to support NFEC's efforts and that might have further accelerated the extension of the CASP model. Capacity building of stakeholders for model extension was not the Project focus in the PDM; nonetheless, it should have been more targeted as the Project progressed.

(8) Macro viewpoint to examine the fundamental problems should not be forgotten

The Project aimed at improving the government ASP programs within the existing framework. It tried to explore the room for improvement at the field level focusing on implementation mechanism. As a result, the Project was able to produce a variety of means for improvement, and practices at the district and the field level were conducted successfully. From the early stage of the Project, however, it was found that there are some difficulties and pitfalls in the current ASP modalities and that the whole ASP programs need to be reviewed, taking into consideration of involvement of formal schools and/or local governments. Yet, the Project maintained the originally planned tasks and seemed to limit itself within the existing framework of ASP programs. Instead, the Project could have raised those issues of and suggestions for the difficulties and pitfalls of the ASP modalities that the Project was based on and adjust activities with more flexible project management.

7. Recommendations

7-1 During the rest of the Project period

(1) Supporting NFEC's efforts to extend the CASP model

As mentioned earlier, according to interviews with Japanese experts, NFEC's initiatives to CASP model extension to Sindhupalchok and Sarlahi districts were not very successful. Factors that affected the results of the efforts should be more clearly identified and be taken into considerations when NFEC develop the extension plan for 10 districts.

(2) Supporting districts' efforts to extend the CASP model within the district

The Project conducted dissemination workshops within Dhading district and Kathmandu district, and the support to districts' efforts for dissemination to other areas within the district should be further continued. This includes development of a dissemination plan and provision of technical support to DEO if the implementation starts before the Project ends.

(3) Strengthening networks with DDC

Some ASP centres succeeded to get financial supports from VDC as a result of good relationship between CMC and VDC. Considering the current budget limitation for ASP centres from MOE, resources need to be sought from other channels. DDC has started receiving District Development Fund, 25% of which is to be spent for social sector. This can be considered one of the possible sources of funding. MOLD has been already in the central network of ASP, however practical coordination has not been made. Making MOLD aware of the needs of ASP is important, but at the same time, direct advocacy to DDC is necessary. The Project is expected to further support DEO in advocating LDO at least in the pilot 2 districts. As the ASP guideline may not be appropriate to advocate personnel in DDC for orientation, development of ASP leaflet may be necessary.

(4) Dissemination of ASP guideline through annual DEO workshops conducted by DOE

The Project plans to distribute the final version of ASP guideline to all the districts. The team strongly suggests that distribution should be followed by face-to-face introduction of CASP experience and discussion. Experience of advocacy to LDO in pilot 2 districts can be also shared. DEO meetings

conducted by DOE may be good occasions for this activity. The number of guidelines to be distributed needs to be examined as well to make dissemination effective.

(5) Developing policy suggestions regarding overall ASP program

The Project has completed the draft operational guideline for ASP implementation. During the development of the guideline, the Project has identified weaknesses of the ASP program that should be rectified at the same time of application of the CASP model, since they may be preventing the applied CASP model from producing good impacts. The team suggests that the Project articulates the issues and policy suggestions for those issues, followed by sharing with NFEC, DOE, MOE and other development partners.

Issues to be discussed may include the followings:

- How to support FSP students who face complex difficulties to continue schooling such as poverty, family problems (single parenting, child neglect, child abuse, and etc.), child labor, and frequent transfer due to seasonal migration of the family. Experience of CASP approaches used in the rural FSP and the urban FSP may be helpful.
- What kinds of support should be continued after ASP graduates progressed to regular schools including financial support such as scholarships and educational support such as tutoring, and how that should be ensured. ASP graduates are still at high risk of dropping out due to poverty and social constrains..
- How to ensure equivalency of ASP programs to formal schooling. Regular schools often conduct a placement test to check levels of ASP graduates, and register them accordingly. Being registered in the lower grade than the grade they are supposed to be makes ASP children discouraged and this eventually downgrades credibility of ASP centers. What kind of mechanism to sure equivalency at the ASP side and what kind of support such as remedial teaching needs to exist in mother schools can be identified from the CASP experience. For equivalency point of view, conditions, qualification and salary of facilitators need to be examined as well.
- How to increase the number of ASP to cover those left behind. Coordination with various stakeholders needs to be discussed such as collaboration with private companies to ensure provision of education to employees and their facilities.
- How to institutionalize the linkage with regular schools.

7-2 After the completion of the Project

(6) Clarification of limitations and responsibilities of regular schools for out-of-school children

Regular schools are to serve those who come to school and take care of students as long as they are enrolled. Currently responsibility of formal schools is limited to issues within schools. CASP experience has shown that quality of ASP centers improves when they are linked with regular school nearby (mother school). If this practice is to continue, responsibilities of regular schools need to be listed and enforced for institutionalization through education regulations.

(7) Revision of ASP program

MOE makes it clear that alternative provision of education is necessary. Using the above described CASP's policy suggestions as reference, the Nepal side is expected to review modalities and implementation processes of ASP program. NFEC's lead role in policy and research development is strongly expected in this matter, however, all stakeholders need to commit to this issue since ASP is the matter of formal education as well.